



State Representative **Mark Miloscia**



Autumn 2001

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Committees:

- State Government - *Vice Chair*
- Children & Family Services
- Financial Institutions & Insurance
- Joint Legislative Audit & Review Committee (JLARC)
- Legislative Evaluation & Accountability Program Committee (LEAP)

Dear Friends,

The recent terrorist attacks on our nation have made us all feel vulnerable. This newfound vulnerability is demonstrating itself in our reluctance to travel, our desire to stay home with our families, and our resolve to root out terrorism. But it also reveals itself in our nation's slumping economy.

In our region, we have seen the impact in Boeing's recent announcement of up to 30,000 job cuts and economic forecasts predicting a slowdown in the state's economy. Additionally, the latest revenue forecasts show a decline that will require the state to cut services next year.

These are truly some tough times for our country and our state. But if there is one good thing that has come out of the horrible recent events it is that we are more unified than ever. The countless flags on front porches and cars show our commitment to working together to address our nation's problems. I am sure we will come out of this difficult period stronger than before.

Inside is a description of some of the major issues we will be addressing this session. I have also included a section for your comments. Please let me know if you have any questions or comments about public safety, our economic health, transportation or any other issues that concern you.

Sincerely,

Mark Miloscia

A Report to the 30th District

State Representative **Mark Miloscia**

PUBLIC SAFETY:

Ensuring public safety is the top priority of government. In the event of a crisis, our public agencies must be prepared to respond quickly while maintaining the daily operations that make us all feel safe. Fortunately, we have not experienced a tragedy comparable to the attacks on New York and Washington, DC. But last February's earthquake taught us how to respond to a situation that alarms our citizens, fouls up our transportation network and damages many workplaces and homes.



Emergency Operations Center

On that nerve-racking, Capitol-shaking day last February, the state's Emergency Operations Center (EOC) at Fort Lewis brought together 150 employees from state agencies and the National Guard to coordinate the state's response. And the center operated with impressive efficiency. The center was able to rapidly collect information about what public facilities were closed, which highways and roads were severely damaged, and where citizens could turn for help.

The EOC is designated as the central location for information gathering, disaster analysis, and response coordination during an emergency. The information gathered is then used by state officials to make decisions concerning emergency actions and to prioritize the use of state resources needed to respond to the emergency. The EOC may issue emergency warnings or disseminate critical information and

instructions to state employees and the public who may need to take protective actions.

As vice chair of the State Government Committee, I will continue to work to ensure that the EOC is well-equipped to handle any crisis that may confront our state.

Bremerton Readiness Center

Another important emergency response project we set in motion last year is the establishment of an emergency response training facility dedicated to preparing firefighters, paramedics, and law enforcement officers to deal with emergencies. The facility, located in Bremerton, is an important new endeavor that will be used collaboratively by the U.S. Navy, several local fire districts, and the National Guard. This multi-agency effort will be critical in ensuring that the people charged with guaranteeing public safety are adequately trained to deal with an emergency.



TRANSPORTATION:

Last session we passed several measures to save taxpayers money by streamlining the permitting process and simplifying the design and construction of transportation projects. Unfortunately, we still failed to pass a long-term transportation plan to address our many urgent transportation needs

A Report to the 30th District

and a strong performance audit budget amendment which I wrote and introduced. This is unacceptable.

Despite the implementation of reforms and accountability measures we have put in place in recent years, our transportation needs far outweigh the level of funding we are currently providing. In fact, over the next twenty years we are looking at a shortfall on the order of \$30-\$40 billion for transportation projects. All of us have felt the impacts of traffic congestion- whether arriving late for work or missing an appointment or showing up late for dinner. The question remains as to how we proceed from here.

I will continue to fight for a balanced transportation system that includes roads, buses, ferries, commuter rail, HOV lanes, and other measures that will help reduce traffic congestion in south King County and Pierce County. And I encourage you to provide your input about what approaches the Legislature should take in addressing this issue next session.

OPERATING BUDGET:

The recent terrorist attacks have hampered our already-cooling economy in Washington state. The Boeing layoffs, reduced tourism, and lost airline revenues are some of the hardest-hit segments of our economy. These economic conditions have a ripple effect on other areas of our economy, resulting in more layoffs and falling revenue for the state. To put it mildly, our state budget is in a pinch. The latest revenue forecast, developed before the September 11 attacks, reduced state revenues by about \$100 million. The November forecast is likely to increase that shortfall by between \$200 million and \$800 million.

The governor has already called on the six largest state



agencies to propose cuts amounting to 15 percent of each agency's budget. These agencies include the departments of Social & Health Services, Corrections, Community, Trade and Economic Development, Health, Ecology, and Fish and Wildlife. These cuts will have a real impact on state services that will impact our elderly neighbors, our disabled citizens, our health care system, our state parks, and other critical programs. We will attempt to do this in a way that does not jeopardize the most necessary programs, but it will be very difficult. And we are committed to doing this without raising taxes.

In my legislative career, I have worked to make government operate more efficiently and maintain its accountability to the public. As a member of the Joint Legislative Audit and Review Committee (JLARC), I work to monitor the efficiency and effectiveness of state agency operations, the impact of state programs, and the compliance of agencies with legislative intent. I am tired of only being offered the choices of raising taxes or cutting programs. Our government agencies must spend much more time looking for long term savings by introducing efficiency programs. This coming session I will be introducing a number of performance and accountability bills ranging from performance audits to improving the regulatory process to measuring agency performance in finance and customer service.

I encourage you to help me do this by providing your thoughts about state programs that you think need to be improved or programs that you want to trim or protect.





COMMENTS

Please use this space to write comments about any issues or concerns you may have.

Dear Rep. Miloscia,

Please cut and remove your
comments and mail to:

Rep. Mark Miloscia
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Name: _____

Address: _____

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